

LATIN AMERICAN STORIES

Compiled by

GEORGE H. TRULL

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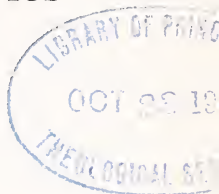
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Latin American Stories



Compiled by
GEORGE H. TRULL

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First, Second and Third Series. Author of "Missionary
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GEORGE H. TRULL

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Latin American Stories

Introduction

The following stories have been collected from a wide range in order to depict conditions and needs in Latin America. They are suitable for use in any grade in the Sunday school, for either class or platform instruction. Such adaptation as may be necessary for the different grades or departments should be made.


The stories will be particularly valuable for use in connection with "Talks on Latin America," by George H. Trull. These Talks present the work in the fields in Latin America, where the Presbyterian Church is at work through its Foreign Board.

Latin American Stories will also be enjoyed as a general reading book by young people and children.

Acknowledgment is hereby made to the various authors of the different stories, to "Over Sea and Land," and to the Mission Boards which have published many of the stories in leaflet form.

GEORGE H. TRULL

New York City,
September 14, 1916.



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Latin American Stories

I

MEXICO

Why a Couple at Seventy Took a Thirty-mile Walk

"In a wooded valley, miles from any other human habitation, lived José H——, an old ranchero (ranchman), whose boys and girls had grown up and scattered far and wide, leaving him and his Maria alone in the smoky cabin in which generations of his family had lived.

"One day a man with a pack on his back stopped at the door. He had books to sell. José was proud to say he had seen one before. Maria never had. Neither could read, but there was Manuel, their son, fifteen miles away, who could. The book was purchased, and the two walked over the hills that evening to ask Manuel to read it to them. To their dismay, Manuel said this was a Protestant book, and cursed by the priest.

"'Take it out of the house,' said Manuel's wife, with flashing eyes. 'Carry it home,' said Manuel, when the three were out of doors; 'I'll come and read it to you next saint's day.' He added in a whisper, 'These are God's words.'

"José and Maria trudged back again. They were both over seventy years old, but this was not much of a walk for them. The days seemed long, but Manuel came at last, bringing a friend with him,

both as eager as the old couple to hear the 'wonderful words of life.' They would not have dared to read them in their own village. This was the first of a series of such readings in that secluded old cabin. Their numbers increased until its one room was filled at each meeting. Men and women, some of them as old as José and Maria, with children of various ages, sat huddled together on the floor, listening, often with streaming eyes, as Manuel, by the light of a tallow candle, read the story of Jesus and His love in the Gospel of St. Luke. After some months of precious privilege, this little company of believers, for such they had become, were attacked by a mob instigated by the parish priest from Manuel's village. Stones were thrown in at the open door, killing one person and injuring several more. The meetings were temporarily broken up, but in time this became one of the numerous small congregations scattered throughout the country. These are often unexpectedly discovered by the missionaries, and ministered to by them as they have opportunity."

—Quoted in "Home Life in Lands Not Christian,"
Mexico.

Why a Mexican Lawyer Changed His Mind

Alberto came to our school to matriculate as a day scholar. His father brought him and begged that he should be allowed to enroll as a student, but that he must not study the Bible, which was required of all our students. After several interviews and many

hours spent over it, he finally decided to leave him in spite of the fact that he must have a daily lesson in the Word of God. The class that he entered was studying the life of Gideon. Gideon appeals to any normal boy, and so he appealed very strongly to Alberto. He borrowed a Bible from the desk each day, and his teacher reported that he always had his lesson prepared and a great many verses memorized.

By the time the class was ready to take up the life of Samuel, Alberto kept the Bible in his desk instead of returning it to me each night; by permission, of course. He had not gotten very far in that wonderful life when he asked me what a Bible would cost, showing me the kind of binding he wished. I told him, and he asked me to sell him one. This I did. I wrote his name and the date in it. He wanted to take it home that day at noon, which was Monday. So he asked me to wrap it up for him in paper. Boys were often hooted at for carrying Bibles, and often times the Bible disappeared from beneath their arms before they reached home. Alberto came back without his Bible, and my heart sank; for many of our children had Bibles confiscated from them the first day they went home with them. The Bible didn't come back. I inquired of the teacher how Alberto was reciting his Bible, and she said, "He always knows that lesson better than any other." So I prayed that wherever the Bible was, it might be bringing blessing into some one's life.

The week passed and on Friday morning the knocker on the door sounded just as we were opening school. I went, and there stood Alberto's father,

and with him his five beautiful little girls, ranging in age from five to fourteen. On his face was a generous smile, and tucked securely under his arm, without any paper covering, was that Blessed Book. He said, "Senorita, did you notice that Alberto did not bring his Bible back?" Of course, I told him I had, and then he asked, "What did you think?" I replied, "I was afraid that it was confiscated, but I did not ask the boy." "Yes, I confiscated it. I am a lawyer, as you know. I had never seen a Bible. My wife was nearly heart-broken that her son was in this Protestant school, and so when Alberto brought home this Bible I decided I would find out what it was that he was studying. I took it to my office, and I stopped for nothing this whole week. I started with the first verse of Matthew, and last night I finished with the last verse of Revelation. Now I have brought my little girls, for I said to my wife, if that is the kind of religious training my boy is getting I shall not let my girls be cheated out of it. Here they are. Give them each a Bible and teach them just as much about Jesus as you possibly can."

—By **BLANCHE B. BONINE.**

A Mexican Mother's Lament

One evening very late, as I was coming home from making a call, I saw a woman slip out of the house and crawl along the wall of her corral and pour something out of vessel on the ground. I wondered what she was doing. Something in her man-

ner told me it was, in her mind, almost an offering that she was making.

So the next day, with my Bible under my arm and a bag of loaf sugar and a face with a smile on it, I walked up to the enclosure, and, calling the children, gave them the sugar. The mother, seeing me, invited me inside. I went, of course. Pretty soon I asked her to let me see the baby. You are always sure there is a baby; but, in this case, her face fell and she said, "My babies died; they were twins." I sympathized with her and asked what was the matter.

She didn't know; but added, with an awful pain in her voice as she whispered to me, "Senorita, they were not baptized."

I said, "That doesn't matter, Señora, they are in Heaven waiting for you."

She immediately said, "Oh, no, Senorita, don't you know that unbaptized babies go to another place, where they burn up all the time? But we Mexican mothers know what to do for them. We bury them near the house where we can get at them, and then at night we pour water over their graves, and that keeps their little eyes from drying out and their little throats don't burn so badly. Otherwise they would thirst forever and forever. My husband doesn't believe that; but the priest says so, and so we do all we can; but oh, my heart longs to see my babies, and oh, why did they die before I could get them baptized?"

I opened my Bible and read her the story of Jesus with the little children, and she listened; but then she said, "Yes, yes, that was for the baptized ones, but not for mine."

I assured her finally that I was right, but she looked at me, and said, "If that is true, won't you go and tell it to all the other Mexican women before they lose their babies, for that can't mean mine now?"

When I think of the American mother, sure that her departed baby is safe in Heaven and waiting for her, my whole soul cries out that the Mexican mother shall have the same joyous expectation, too. It isn't fair that she has never heard that her precious baby is safe in the arms of Jesus.

—By **BLANCHE B. BONINE.**

Boy Life in Mexico

Our next door neighbor, Mexico, is a beautiful and interesting country to study and most enchanting in many respects. As we learn more about the life of the boys and girls and men and women we shall see it is not all romance and beauty.

Suppose we take the life of a rich boy whom we will call Antonio, the name of the favorite children's saint. When he was born his mamacita (mother) put a saint's tooth on his head to keep off sickness and evil. She also put a little rosary about his neck to prevent the evil one from kissing him and thus making the baby wicked. Every morning and evening he was sprinkled with holy water. When he was six years old a boy was hired to be his servant and go everywhere with him, carrying his books or

playthings and obeying his slightest wish. Indeed, a rich boy is never allowed to go *anywhere* alone. Sweetmeats he may have in abundance, and the result is Antonio is pale and lazy.

Antonio's home is a low, flat house of adobe, painted in colors and built around an open court, which is gay with fountains, plants, flowers and birds. Everyone who can afford it has a court or "patio" of this kind. The flat roof has a wall about the edge and upon this roof the family sleep in hot weather—not a bad plan, is it?

Antonio's father has a large farm surrounded by a hedge of cactus. Here nearly all the food of the family is raised—coffee, fruit, vegetables, sugarcane, as well as live stock; ponies, of course, for nearly every boy of means owns a pony or burro and learns early to ride and throw the lasso.

On Sunday and on feast days he is taken to church, where he is taught to repeat prayers and bring gifts to the Virgin Mary and to so many other saints that he scarcely knows who is the true God. If he has a toothache he prays to one saint, if a fever it is to another saint, another for rheumatism, and so on.

When eight or ten years old he is confirmed, an important but mysterious ceremony. He is taught no reverence for sacred things and most of the priests are unworthy of reverence. He is *never* allowed to see a Bible and is taught that no one can pray to God but the priests. If he wishes God to bless him or forgive his sins he must go to the priest and *pay* for it, then the *priest* will pray for him!

Catholics, yes, but not such as we know in the United States. In their cathedrals we should see gold and silver and precious stones everywhere. Images of God and of the angels and the saints are made in solid gold, yet all about a miserable, poor people, hardly knowing the meaning of the prayers they are saying. "Gold all about them which they cannot touch and no golden love of God inside to lift them above it, theirs is not a *live* Catholic religion."

Sunday afternoon is the favorite day for seeing the bullfight, and blood-thirsty and cruel as the sight is, boys are taught to love it.

But the rich families are few. What of the *many* who are poor? Let us look at little Juan (pronounced Hwan). His home was a little house shaped like a tent, made of wooden rafters and thatched with straw. It had no windows, but only a door without hinges, just lifted into place at night and set aside in the daytime. A little open stove with a few coals was all that gave warmth in the coolest weather. In babyhood he rode on his mother's back when she went out. When she went to the stream to do her washing he went, too, and waited while the clothes were washed on the stones and dried upon the bushes. Later, as he lived in the country, he rode on the mule's back with father, and perhaps one or two other children. Clothes were no matter. A few rags, if any, were all he expected.

When old enough to begin to help father or mother, he was a little fruit pedler trudging about with a tray of fruit on his head. Sometimes he was a milk

boy going from door to door with a jar of milk. Later he was a water pedler with a pigskin full of water on his back. When he had saved enough to invest in a barrel and a donkey and cart, then was he prosperous indeed! Other boys hired out as "peons" to the wealthy families. The rich boy despised work, but Juan *must* work some of the time at least.

There are schools in the cities, but they are not for such boys as Juan. Only the few can afford to pay for the education of boys, and *certainly* not for *girls*. Religious ceremonies, too, belong to the rich and not to the poor. When Juan's parents had saved up a little money they took him to a priest to be baptized. If the sum was enough, well and good; if not, they were sent away until more could be brought. But Juan's parents were not poor compared with many, many others. Often two or three families live huddled together in a one-room hut, and the children, ragged and dirty, are sent out to spend the time in begging. Indeed, most of them would far rather beg than work!

Two very bad things most Mexican children learn—no matter where they live or whether they are rich or poor—intemperance and dishonesty. The Mexican drink is called *pulque* and is as bad as any other intoxicating drink.

Mexican children are as fond of play as any the world over. Two popular plays are "fighting roosters" and "throwing the barrel." The first is played by holding the right foot up behind with the right hand and striking the enemy with the knee

while hopping around on the left foot. The one who falls is defeated. Throwing the barrel is played by all boys, big and little. It consists of tossing a barrel-shaped toy tied to the end of a stick and catching it on the sharpened end, a trick requiring some little skill. Another play especially popular at Easter time, is burning effigies of Judas. The little figures known as Judases are pieces of fireworks and go off with a bang and a fizz.

The little boys and girls of Mexico are bright and responsive and well repay time and sacrifice to teach them. The need of more schools and more teachers is great, and as the opposition of the priests is lessening there is a large opportunity to teach them the true gospel and open the Bible to them.

—J. T. M., WOMEN'S BOARD OF MISSIONS OF THE INTERIOR.

Hopeful Hope

Esperanza (meaning hope) was a pupil in the Presbyterian Normal School for Girls at San Angel, a suburb of Mexico City. She appreciated the blessings of the "glorious gospel of the blessed God," which, remember, "was committed to *my* trust' and *yours*, so much that she could not keep it all to herself as you and I can and do, but must pass it on to others. She wrote home to a younger sister (we saw the letter with our own eyes), "Ask father to let you come to school with me next year. We will both pray our *Heavenly* Father, also, that He will help us, so that you may come. You do not always wish to

be a mere drudge, grinding, grinding corn all day, do you? We will *pray much* that you may come to school." The pathos and yearning in that letter echo the desire of many a Mexican girl's heart. The Mexican *situation* may seem hopeless. Such *girls* are not. *Your* part of the commission is to make schools possible for all the sisters of every Esperanza in Mexico. *Our* part is to *go, teach, preach* and *live* the glorious gospel, on the native heath of every Esperanza.

—From "Studies in Life," by MRS. WILLIAM WALLACE.

"The Servant in the House"

Her name was Rafaela. She came, a mere child, to help with the washing, the baking, and the stewing, at Coyoacan Manse some years ago. Coyoacan is just outside of Mexico City. Many a time Rafaela was reprimanded by her only living relatives, a father and a sister, because she *would* read her Bible; because she *persisted* in attending the "cultos" or church services of us heretics. She not only dared to like *us*, but she liked our religion as well. She finally brought matters to a head by uniting with our church. Rafaela was persecuted but not forsaken: being persecuted she suffered: but she was blessed when her father persecuted her and she prayed for that sister who likewise persecuted her. Later the father died, but not until he had become reconciled to his heretic daughter. One cannot fight alone, and the sister, too, finally adjusted herself to the trying

circumstances as best she could. Though she never became enthusiastic over her only sister renouncing the faith of her fathers and becoming a despised Protestant, she did at least cease her persecution. All doubters of a saving grace, all doubters of the power of the everlasting gospel to transform *Mexican* and all other lives, are cordially invited to come to our home and see Rafaela with their own skeptical eyes.

—From "Studies in Life," by MRS. WILLIAM WALLACE.

A Mexican Elisha

A man of God! our own dear old Dr. Arcadio Morales, pastor of our largest church, "Divino Salvador" (or Divine Saviour) in Mexico City. When we see this Mexican Elisha coming our way, we always murmur to ourselves, "Let us make a little chamber on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick; and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither." (II Kings, 4:10.) Dr. Morales is our "Moody of Mexico." He has perhaps been the means of bringing more souls into the kingdom than any man on earth. He was converted in his youth by simply reading the Bible, his God book, as he calls it. He read alone for seven years before he heard a Bible sermon or knew anything about an evangelical church. He says that the first time he read the Sermon on the Mount he was *tremendously* impressed. Think of never reading those blessed "blesseds" until you were in your teens! How *would* it feel? Dr.

Morales' work among the prisoners of the Mexican penitentiaries has been only short of the marvelous. For years he has carried the Message to the worst of criminals and men as vile as the cells into which they are thrust. When unable to go in person he writes letters to those who can read. As these must all pass through the hands of the prison authorities, a few Mexican jailors have had the same experience as he who guarded Paul and Silas.

—From "Studies in Life," by MRS. WILLIAM WALLACE.

PEN PICTURES OF MEXICO*

By Mrs. D. B. Wells

Only a Mexican Woman

She was sitting on the ground, leaning against the brick wall of the railroad station house in Monterey, one of Mexico's old women, my first acquaintance. Her gray hair was uncombed and hung matted over her shoulders; her dress was ragged and dirty; her mouth was closely covered with a piece of soiled cloth lest the fresh morning air should enter her body and do her harm. Her face was wrinkled and dirty, her hands and bare feet the same; and her eyes looked off into the distance with the dull motionless stare of indifference and hopelessness. While waiting for my personal conductor, I went out to her, with no medium of communication but a smile and a small coin. Neither

* Adapted from "A Bit of Mexico Personally Observed."

seemed effective or was accepted. I could get no response. She glanced at me a moment and then resumed her gazing into the far-away. Hardly a muscle had moved. Weeks after I saw her still sitting in the same place in the same position, still gazing. I wondered,—had she not stirred all those weeks? And yet, why should she? Life held so little of hope or joy or even comfort for her, an old woman. A heathen? Perhaps, and one of so many.

Carmencita

I want to tell you the story of Carmencita, one of the girls in the Boarding School at Saltillo. It was just sunset as I stepped over the threshold of the school one evening into its flower-filled patio. They were expecting me, and ranged round three sides of the patio were the hundred or more girls of the school, who at once began to sing in greeting the Mexican National Hymn, said to be the most artistically beautiful of all national hymns, while one girl came forward and laid in my arms a great bunch of roses, kissing my hand with all the grace of an accomplished courtier. Later during family prayers, I supposed of course that the principal of the school would be the one to offer prayer. Instead I heard a voice at the far end of the room which profoundly impressed me by its sincerity and devotion of tone, since of course I could not understand the words. I was told the speaker was a member of the Senior Class, by name

Carmencita, "little song," the girl of the roses. I saw her frequently during my week's stay, a girl of quiet, dignified presence, not handsome but attractive, always neatly and tastefully dressed, of large influence with the other girls. Sunday evening she led the C. E. meeting in such a way as to command my admiration and appreciation of its value. This is a three-picture story. This is the first picture.

The second picture: One day I was taken to a little place up in the mountains that I might see village work. Slowly we climbed up the range on the narrow gauge railroad in the little narrow-gauge coaches in which both men and women were smoking freely. I was told that there was but one place in all Mexico where smoking was forbidden, a Pullman car. I certainly saw people smoking everywhere, even in the great Cathedral in Mexico City.

In the course of our calls about town we visited an old shoemaker. He began pleading with my companion, the principal of the school, to send them a teacher for their school. "Our pastor is gone; our teacher is gone; we have no school. Our children are out on the street; they do not learn any good. If you send us a teacher, I will board her for nothing." I could appreciate his earnest desire. The final call took us to the outskirts of the village, across a barnyard, to a queer sort of a shed built of cornstalks, without windows, called in the vernacular, "a jackal," only pronounce the j as h. A man and a woman came running out, whose faces beamed with joy when they saw my

friend. We were invited in; but the one room already entertained a burro, some pigs, and numberless chickens, making it seem overfull without additions. So the woman ran across to a neighbor's and borrowed two chairs which she placed for us outside among the cornstalks. They seemed delighted to see my companion. As we left I asked who they were, and why I was taken to see them.

"You admired Carmencita down at the school?"

"Indeed I did."

"Well, those are her parents and that is her home."

There flashed into my mind that verse in Isaiah, "The hole of the pit whence ye are digged."

"But what of her future? Is it a blessing to her to educate her so far above her parents and her surroundings?"

"Wait and see."

The third picture: The following year a well-written letter in English from Carmencita told me she had returned to her home after her graduation; had opened the village school the old shoemaker wanted; was helping her parents to build themselves a little home; was assistant to the pastor in Sunday School, C. E. meetings, and Mothers' Meetings; and was so very happy in all her work. She wanted me to buy for her an organ for their church, enclosing the money which had all been raised under her direction. From others I learned that at the time of her graduation the Government had offered her a position in the public schools at a salary three times as much as she was receiving

in her own village. She declined the offer out of filial love and a sense of gratitude to those unknown friends in the United States who had supported her during her school life, since in the Government position she could not teach of Christ.

The Duchess

Yes, there was the "Duchess" as she was called in the Girls' Boarding School in Mexico City, another splendid school with so wonderful a record of accomplishment. The Duchess, a little girl of ten or twelve, and her mother appeared one day at the school, having walked down from the mountains almost a hundred miles, only to be told that there was no room, even though the mother carefully opened her little bundle and proffered ten Mexican dollars. They went away with faces looking backward. The next year they came again, and again they went away with backward glances. The third year they came, long before the opening of the school, and the ten dollars had grown to fifty. The mother went up the mountain track alone, looking backward, but happy. At first the girl must be watched every night to see that she went to bed properly, else she would be found still dressed, curled up on the floor under the bed. She liked it better that way. When I saw her, after six years of training, a member of the Senior Class, tall, finely developed, graceful, the leader of the whole school, trusted alike by teachers and comrades, she seemed to me the embodiment of sweet, true, noble Mexican womanhood.

Won by the Word

He had been living in a small town south of Mexico City. For several days he noticed that his small purchases of family supplies were wrapped in the leaves of a book which the merchant tore from its covers, always making the sign of the Cross. The man's curiosity was roused, and he began to read them. To his surprise and rather to his disapproval they proved to be leaves from a Protestant Bible. He tried to stop reading them, but could not let them alone. Finally he asked the merchant where he had obtained the book, and was told he had taken it away from one of his children whom he had allowed to attend a Mission school. He regarded the book as dangerous and diabolical; but his habits of thrift decided him not to burn it but to use it as wrapping paper. The customer bought the remaining leaves, read with increasing conviction, and became a most earnest Protestant Christian. Thus another instance of the fulfilment of the promise, "My Word shall not return unto Me void."

Images in Mexico

Images in Mexico, and in fact in all of Latin America, are grotesque. The Saviour and the Saints are represented in every style of clothes, from that worn by the wild Indians to suits finished in the most extravagant and fashionable patterns—from mere rags to velvet mantles embroidered with

gold and jewels. Offerings of thanksgiving consist of fine clothes and costly pieces of jewelry.

These images are regarded by the people with superstitious reverence. To doubt their miraculous power is regarded as little less than blasphemy.

The Virgin Mary, whose images are by far the most numerous, is called by various names according to the places where she is said to have appeared. The most famous is the "Virgin of Guadalupe," proclaimed the patron saint of Mexico by Pope Clement VII. It is said that the Virgin appeared on two occasions to the pious Indian Juan Diego on the barren mountain of Tepeyac. She told him that she was to become the patron saint of the Mexican Indians, and ordered him to tell the Bishop that she wished to be worshiped at the foot of that mountain. The Bishop required Juan to give a token of his mission, so the Virgin appeared to him the third time and told him to ascend the mountain, cut roses, and bring them to her. Although the mountain was perfectly barren, he found the roses, and brought them to her. She threw them into his *tilma* or mantle and said, "Return once more to the Bishop and tell him that these flowers are the credentials of your mission." "When he found himself in the presence of the prelate, he unfolded his *tilma* to present the roses, when lo, there appeared on the garment that picture of the Virgin, which now, after centuries, still exists without having suffered the slightest injury." The church was built, and is the most famous in Mexico. The sacred picture, in a frame of pure

gold, is on the high altar, receiving the adoration of multitudes. Many of the men and women of the country are called "Guadalupe," and the image is found in almost every house. On the anniversary of this supposed miracle, a great festival is held and attended by all, including the archbishop and high officials, and orations are delivered by distinguished men in commemoration of the event.

Another celebrated image is "The Virgin of Remedios." On the morning after the *noche triste* (the night when the Spanish were expelled from the Capital), one of the invaders found a small doll in a *maguey* plant, and proclaimed it to be a miraculous image of the Virgin, and a token of success. Afterwards a church was built on the spot, and the little lady, dressed in satins embroidered with pearls, emeralds and diamonds, was called the "Virgin of Remedios," or "remedies," because she appeared at so critical an hour. To this day she is the patroness of all in misfortune. She is hired out by the day in times of distress, often for enormous sums. Images of less power can be had for less money, and a sick bed is not infrequently surrounded by a number of them. At the beginning of the disease, if the people are poor, a cheap image is hired, perhaps for twenty-five cents, but as the gravity of the case increases more powerful saints must be brought at any cost.

—*Question Book Series, Mexico. Pages 14-16.*

A STORY OF SACRIFICE

It was the week before Christmas. Miss Turner's heart was heavy. The year had been a terrible one. No crop had been made. People were starving from want of food. They had pawned every article of furniture and nearly all their clothing. Here was the happy Christmas season, and absolutely nothing with which to have a treat for the little Sunday school children.

However, a Christmas program was in preparation. The children were so happy, for a Mexican child loves a fiesta of any kind. Then, too, there were hordes of other little children on the streets, even poorer than these. They would not dare attend the Christmas celebration at the Protestant Church.

How could one help? And then the missionary had a happy thought. Why not invite the Sunday school children to repeat their program in the school house and invite all these other children to attend? It was thought that two hundred could be accommodated. Invitation cards were given out only to the very poorest children.

As the Christmas day approached the missionary felt she wanted to give them a feast. Not even the little Protestant children would expect anything, for they had never gotten it. But this was a very bad year and she did want them to have a fine day.

She planned for candy! Not a person in that town had seen candy for months. And she dared

to hope for oranges. And there had not been an orange in town for weeks! And then her better sense told her to get some corn to make some tortillas. (Pronounce tor-te-yas.) These are to be Mexican table what bread is to ours. How would you like to go to a Christmas festival and receive a piece of dry bread? But were you a Mexican child, you would jump with joy at the thought of it.

Miss Turner sent a man out to visit the ranches to buy oranges. She begged a rich man in the town to sell her some corn. From a wholesale grocer she bought chocolate and sugar.

Where did she get the money? She said, "That was easy. I couldn't send any presents, I couldn't receive any; so I spent what I might have spent and what my friends might have spent, and what was over was my Birthday present to the King."

She made hundreds of tortillas. She made a mountain of chocolate candy. And then she stripped her bed of its mosquito netting and made tarletan bags for the goodies. And, oh joy! at the very last moment a man came in from the north with nuts to sell. She filled each bag with its orange and nuts and candy. And then she made two hundred and fifty bunches of tortillas. You see she had two hundred invited guests, and twenty-five performers. The extra twenty-five were for an emergency.

Three o'clock Christmas afternoon arrived. Long before the street was crowded with children and their mothers. The gate had to be opened with care so the children would not trample each other in their eagerness. Soon three hundred children

and the mothers of fifty families were inside. Then those who held those precious grimy cards were singled out and seated, while the rest stood around the back of the room.

The twenty-five little Protestant children stepped on to the platform. How they sang and recited! And how they repeated from memory the Story of His Birth! And how delighted and excited they were! .

And then they waited in an adjoining room while the missionary told the simple story of Jesus' love to those poor, hungry, dirty little brown brothers and sisters of yours and mine, who had never in all their lives listened to such a strang tale about Jesus. He had always been a dead Jesus to them. He hung upon a cross in the church and had the saddest face you ever saw. Their mothers strained their ears to catch every sound of this wonderful story. And then the missionary bowed her head and prayed, and she was talking about them, and calling them His little ones!

The missionary went out for a minute and came back with baskets and baskets of tortillas. The little Protestant children had been surprised by the treat in the other room and were now on the platform singing madly, they were so happy. And then it was discovered that many more than two hundred had gotten in the front seats with the cards, and the twenty-five emergency bags would not suffice. What should she do? Her own little children each with his precious bag hugged close to his breast never guessed what the missionary was suf-

fering for them, for she was planning to test those little ones who were singing so joyfully about the love of Jesus.

The song over, the children ran back to their room. Miss Turner went in and spoke to them. Her voice was very sad as she said: "My little children, listen. I didn't know so many children would come in on the invitations, and I don't have enough bags to go around, and I wondered if my little people"—and then she couldn't ask them, and anyway she didn't need to, for at once twenty-five pairs of little brown hands were thrust out at her, holding their only Christmas gifts, and twenty-five little voices eagerly said, "Here's mine, Senorita, here's mine, don't let them go home sorry."

I wonder if Jesus ever received a more precious Birthday gift than the one those little Mexican children gave Him that afternoon?

—By BLANCHE B. BONINE.

JUAN, PANCHITA AND PAZ

A Story of Child Life in Mexico

My story begins when Panchita was standing in the shadow of the little hut-like home with her doll tied on her back,—at least Panchita, being only ten years old, would be supposed to have a doll.

It could open and shut its eyes and cry and—dear, dear! it turns its head, opens and shuts its little hands and is alive! In fact Panchita's doll is her baby sister Paz, which means Peace. But there really was not much peace unless Paz was asleep. So, very often she was on Panchita's back, a little

warm, wriggling creature, calling for much more attention than any well-behaved doll ever expects. But Panchita was watching eagerly for her brother Juan, who had gone to the city early in the day with watermelons to sell. Two big string bags he had—one on each side of his little donkey—and very green and tempting the melons looked, shining through the network. He had also carried two baskets of vegetables, but many a time he had gone as heavily laden and returned before this hour.

Panchita's mother sat in the shade of a huge cactus weaving baskets.

"It is time for Juan to come," said Panchita, looking away to the beautiful mountain in the west behind which the sun was seeking to hide.

Her mother turned smilingly toward the little girl, arose slowly—for Mexico is a land where nobody hurries—and laid aside her half-finished basket.

She expected Juan, and he must have his supper. She had ground some corn that morning after soaking it in lime water.

Panchita could make tortillas (*torteéyas*) from the flour, so now, while her mother took Paz, she made a stiff dough of the corn-flour and water, lighted a charcoal fire in the mud fireplace and sat down on the floor beside it. Then, taking a small lump of dough, she patted and patted it until it was round and flat. It was as good fun as making mud pies!

After the pat-a-cake was ready she laid it on a griddle which was now hot over the charcoal. When

a cake was cooked she laid it in a basket and soon had a nice pile.

The *frijoles* (beans) were already cooked and these she warmed. Then again she ran out to watch for Juan and the donkey. "He is not coming and the sun shines no longer," she said.

The mother put little Paz into a funny hammock-like cradle which swung from the rude ceiling, as she answered: "He was late selling to-day; we will eat," and soon they were sitting beside the tortillas and beans. Chairs? No. Table-cloth? No. Knives, forks, napkins? No, no,—they had their fingers and the *tortillas* for spoons and were quite satisfied.

Panchita made short work of her meal and ran out again to watch for Juan. The stars came out and the air grew cool, but there was no clattering of hoofs such as always told of the donkey's homecoming. Finally Panchita lay down upon a mat in one corner of the little hut, dressed as she had been all day, and sobbed herself to sleep. She had no clean white nightgown or bed, and could not pray as you do because she only knew the Virgin Mary and the Saints. Her mother grew very anxious, too, for Juan had never stayed away so late before. Since the father's death a few months earlier, he had worked like a man, and was always merry even when burdens were heaviest. All night she dozed and waited, but no Juan!

Early the next morning she told Panchita she was going to the city to search for him. Of course the little girl must go, too, but she had no pretty

clothes to wear—only the poor gown we have seen her in, and her brown feet were bare. Her mother wrapped a long, wide scarf, called a *reboso* around her own shoulders, and in it she also wrapped little Paz, whose bright eyes peeped out of its folds behind her shoulders. After a breakfast of tortillas and beans they started on the three-mile walk with heavy hearts.

But where was Juan all this time? He and his little donkey had walked slowly along the street after reaching the city, as he cried: "*Sandias, buenas y baratas!*" (watermelons, good and cheap!) and it was not long before he had sold several. The homes of the wealthy Mexicans are very fine, and are built around a *patio* (court) to which there is but one wide doorway guarded by a porter. So it was only when this man called Juan and opened the door that he could take in his watermelons and other vegetables. But when once inside how he gazed with wide-open eyes at the beautiful flowers and shrubs, the fountain, and the daintily dressed ladies whom he sometimes saw in the balcony! His own home was very poor, but he loved beauty and hoarded every glimpse of such homes to report to Panchita.

He loved to see the boys on their way to school, and the girls, too, each with a servant to carry the books and guard the children from harm. Perhaps you may wonder if the boys tried to steal Juan's watermelons while he was inside a court. No indeed! that would not be like the polite Mexicans. Have you noticed that in every country the people

have some good traits which we might well copy? So in Mexico, rich and poor alike are courteous, and even Juan would doff his coarse, wide-brimmed straw hat very quickly when he met a person older than himself.

No one harmed the donkey while Juan was selling his produce within the house, but on that special day, as the sun grew hot, the donkey concluded to take a stroll all by himself. To tell the truth, Juan was staying a long time in a court—not so grand and beautiful as some—where a motherly lady was talking to him as she selected and paid for nearly everything he had. Before he realized it Juan had told about the little home which he was trying to keep for his mother and his sisters, and how hard it was; and had learned that this was a Protestant school where poor girls could learn many things. *Could Panchita come?* He cared not at all for what the priest might say, for it must be right for a girl like her to *learn*; yes, that is what he—Juan—wanted to do, and the dear lady saw in his earnest face promise of a good heart and mind.

Meanwhile, the donkey walked on, slowly at first, faster as he felt his freedom—wagging his wicked head and twitching his ears gleefully. But donkeys are not allowed to promenade alone in city streets, so he was captured by a policeman, who, seeing no owner, led him away. You can imagine how Juan felt when he came out and missed his faithful burden bearer. He ran to the park first of all,—past the woman who sold *tortillas* and the basket man, past the man with water jars and the

seller of *pulque*—the drink which brings sorrow to so many Mexican homes—even past the seller of sweets from whom he hoped to buy a tiny gift for baby Paz. He ran blindly hither and thither but the stupid donkey was not in the park.

At last Juan ran against a man who caught him by the shoulder and called him "little beggar." But with sobs in his voice Juan told his trouble. "The donkey would go home, of course, but if he was alone he would be arrested," said the man. Arrested! Juan smote his hands together. Who would help a poor Indian boy in such a case?

Then he thought of the kind woman who had bought his vegetables. Perhaps she would care. Perhaps some wise one in that school would tell him what to do.

He had wandered far from the friendly court, but as quickly as possible he made his way to it, and after a little was admitted, and before the lady came a servant was told to give him something to eat.

Hungry as he was, Juan could scarcely crowd down the food. He could not forget the lost donkey, and when finally the lady came his story was told with downcast eyes and halting words.

"Courage, my boy," she said. "I think we can find that runaway." Then came the tall American, her husband, and he wrote down the boy's statement.

It was not an easy matter to find a trace of the little beast, however, and people seemed almost as stupid as the lost animal in their directions.

From place to place they went, and it was about

the time that Panchita was watching the sun set that the man was found who had "arrested" Juan's donkey. Then the boy must "prove property," but the donkey was kind enough to come when his master gave a certain call and to circle around him searching for the choice bit of food which Juan was accustomed to give as his reward.

A very submissive and affectionate donkey he was and finally, after the tall American and the tall Mexican had had quite a discussion, Juan was allowed to take him away. But now it was late and his new friend insisted that the tired boy must sleep in the school building. So while his mother was watching and calling upon the saints to protect him he was sleeping, oh, so soundly!

Bright and early the next morning, he started homeward, but not until he had had a talk with the kind Americano which made his heart glad. His baskets and string bags were empty but his head was full of new ideas, and he made the donkey trot briskly in his eagerness to reach his mother and Panchita. With the morning sun shining in his face he did not recognize a little group approaching until a brown-faced, bare-footed girl made a wild dash toward him, crying out, "Juan! Juan! You are alive!"

In the great rejoicing which followed even the naughty donkey was embraced, and when baby Paz was put upon his back she was the happiest little Indian in all Mexico.

Juan told his story with many an eloquent gesture and the climax was, "And mother, Panchita

can go to the school and grow up like the lady Americano; and perhaps—perhaps I can also go a few hours each day to the school for boys!”

The mother smiled, but wondered why Juan so rejoiced over the prospect. “The saints keep us from the Protestants, but my boy must have this chance if he wants it,” she said to herself.

Panchita smiled, for she and Juan had heard about books and schools, and she felt a desire for better things, as I suppose a young bird feels that he must use his wings while they are growing. The donkey did not smile—he had no sense of humor—but if he had been as wise as he looked he might have thought: “Do you see how my runaway yesterday has been overruled for the good of the family?”

—Courtesy of Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society, Methodist Episcopal Church.

A MEXICAN GIRL

An Impersonation

Note: The child who gives this monologue should be dressed in bare feet, long black skirt, dirty and ragged, and ragged waist. Her hair disheveled and in a plait, down her back. In a word, she should present the appearance of a child of ten or twelve who has had no care whatever.

Lady, will you please give me some money or some bread? My little sister is so hungry, and I couldn’t get anything for her to eat all day.

Why don’t I go home? I have no home to go to. Yes, I had a papa and a mamma and some brothers and sisters, but now I am all alone except for my dear baby sister. Once we had a home and

it was just a tiny house made of adobe and a straw roof and only one room. But we were all happy together, although we had no beds nor tables nor chairs. We all ate and slept on the floor. Papa used to work in the fields and sometimes he helped make crocks and carry them piled up high on his back to the market to sell. Mamma helped too, but she was always busy, making the tortillas (corn cakes). We were always glad when the rainy season came because then we went to the river to bathe, while mamma washed our clothes and hung them on the cactus bushes to dry. During the dry season, it was dreary because the babies were never well, and the sand and dirt were so bad and the pigs would come into the house; mamma said the only reason she liked the dry season was because the sticks would burn without smoking up the air in the house.

Play, did you say? Yes, the boys played bullfight all the time. Me? Dollies? I saw a dollie once; the rich girl at the big ranch house had it. And one time I had a picture of a dollie. Oh, it was so pretty, and we hung it on the wall. It was most the same as having a dollie, because that is all you can do with them any how, just hang them on the wall.

What else did I do? Why there is so much to do. There is always a dear little baby brother or sister to carry on your back and there was always a lot of work to do. I am ten years old now, I think, and of course I can work. I helped mamma grind the corn between two stones and that takes

all morning and your back just nearly breaks, because some days there is nothing else to eat and then you have to make more tortillas. And then there were the sticks to carry from the hills, for that is what we make the fire with. No, there is no stove; just make a fire in the corner and bake the tortillas on a stone over the fire.

And then there was the house to sweep. I was glad it wasn't a big house, because our broom was just some twigs tied together, and there was no handle to them, and you get very tired sweeping that way. It seems to me we do everything with our backs.

How did the boys help? Nobody teaches boys to work, not until they are grown up, and then they don't know how to do anything but carry heavy loads. My papa could carry as much as a horse.

What did I do on Sunday? I don't know what day that is. Oh, yes, that is the day we went to market before we went to church. Sometimes the butcher used to give me some blood in my little crock! Then after market we had to go to church and sit for hours on the cold stone floor and wait and wait, until mamma would get ready to go. I don't know why she stayed so long, and when she came out sometimes she would crawl the whole way home on her poor sore knees, and sometimes she would kiss the stones all the way home. But it was worse when papa went, because then for days we didn't have any beans, nothing but tortillas, and the babies would cry and mamma was so sad for they were hungry.

Sunday School? What is that? Where you hear about Jesus? Oh, I like the saints better, because the saints help you all the time and when you are sick we put the saints all about the place where you lie down, and we burn things in front of them, and see here, if you don't have your saint or the Blessed Virgin you can't ever go to Heaven. Jesus can't help you. He's dead over there in the church on a cross and you wear black dresses for Him during Holy Week, that's all.

Can I read? Why, lady, it's only rich little girls that can read. I peeped in a school door one day, but they drove me away, because I only had rags to wear.

A man came to our town one day and asked my papa to send me to his school, and he said he would teach me all about this Jesus. And then my mamma asked him if he was a Protestant, and he said he was, and she pushed us in the house and begged him on her knees to go away. He went away looking so sad, and my papa said he believed he was a good man, for he had such a kind face. My papa wanted me to go, but my mamma knew that Protestants have horns like Satan, and they worship him too, and sometimes they eat little boys and girls.

Soon after that my papa died and my mamma worked so hard and got so sick, that when we went to market the other day she fell down on the street. I ran to the church to get the priest, but he couldn't come, he said, and when I got back they had carried my mamma away and I can not find my

other little brothers and sisters, and all I have left is this one. I've walked and walked and nobody will help me, and I kissed all the stones in front of the church, and I went inside and sat such a long time in front of the blessed Guadalupe, and I couldn't find the priest, and I had to sell my blessed virgin to buy bread yesterday and now I don't know what to do. Won't you please feed my baby sister? Won't you tell me what to do?

—By BLANCHE B. BONINE.

Latin American Stories

II

GUATEMALA

Pills of Hate

We see many sad cases in Guatemala, the result of ignorance or vice. The condition of the children is often pitiful. Little starved-looking babies who have been sick for weeks or months are brought almost in a dying state. When I ask why a doctor has not been consulted before, the usual answer is that it was because of lack of money. Fortunately we have many hopeful cases also, and some amusing incidents. A short time since an old woman asked me in a confidential whisper if I would give her some pills to make her son hate his wife. She did not approve of the daughter-in-law.

—By DR. MARY GREGG, in *Over Sea and Land*, October, 1913.

A Little Girl of Guatemala

I want to introduce you to a little girl whose name is Isabel. Most of our little girls are about the color of a nice chocolate drop; this one is a brunette with fine black hair and bright, beautiful eyes. She is a jolly little lady who does lots of nice things, and who also gets into mischief. She is very fond of us and we love her.

Her home was not a Christian home like yours. Her father and mother never went to Sunday school nor to church, and never heard sermons preached

from the beautiful story of Jesus and His love. Just like so many thousands of others in this great big world, they were ignorant of the Bible.

So Isabel did not have an opportunity to learn much. Like Topsy, she was just "growing up." One day her mother got a copy of the Bible and became much interested in the wonderful story of salvation. She came to see us very often in order to talk with us about our own life, and then she commenced to talk with her husband and children. But they did not care to hear much about these things. However, little Isabel just loved to have her mother talk with her and tell her the beautiful Bible stories. For several years the mother has been coming to our services and Isabel has come with her and has always been so interested in the Sunday school lessons.

Some time ago Isabel had to have her throat treated. It was not convenient for the family to have the operation in her own home, so she and her mother came to our missionary home, where she stayed many days. Now she is well and strong, and enjoying better health than she has ever known.

Her father has never attended our services to hear for himself what beautiful things we teach. Some time ago some of his relatives told him that we were very bad people and that we taught evil things, going about trying to break up families; separating parents and children. But the whole family knew that Isabel and her mother had both been better since they had been studying, and this little girl, being the youngest of the family and her father's pet, became a peacemaker.

She has suffered a great deal because other children have taunted her and have said many ugly things to her because she comes to Sunday school and church. One day when others were making sport of her, she told them that while they worship gods of wood that have to be carried about in the arms of men and women, that we worship the great God who made the heaven and the earth, and who sent His dear Son to be our Saviour.

The dear little girl has loved the beautiful story ever since she first heard it, has always been very faithful at Sunday school, is now herself a Christian, a little peacemaker in her home, and a little missionary to other children.

—By REV. WILLIAM. B. ALLISON, in *Over Sea and Land*, October, 1912.

Stealing Jesus in Guatemala

Perhaps you think that Central America is a Christian country and does not need missionaries, but these people are taught that the only way to be saved is by money, prayers, burning candles and making themselves do hard and unpleasant things. At Christmas time the people are taught to worship an image of a little baby. They call it "Baby Jesus." There is a Baby Jesus in every home and candles are kept burning before it no matter how poor the people may be. One day I found a little girl sewing on a tiny silk dress. I asked if it were for her doll. "O, no, Senora, it is for our little God." One woman told me that thieves had entered her house the night before

and stolen her "Jesus." Then I could tell her how wrong it is to worship idols, and how much better it is to have Jesus in our hearts where no one can steal Him from us.

These people take the name of God in vain over and over again, for "Jesus" is a common name in their homes. It is not a sacred, holy name to them. One day I asked the name of a little girl, her mother said, "It is 'Jesus,' and the little servant is 'Jesus,' too, we have two Jesuses in this house." A child once told me that her kitten's name was Jesus, and I am sure you will be very much surprised when I tell you that one day as a boy was driving a little black pig to market, we asked his name, and he told us it was "Jesus."

Do you not agree with me that these people need to be taught about God? Will you not pray for these boys and girls? I wish you could see the happy faces of those who have learned to know their Heavenly Father, and Jesus our Saviour. They love to sing,

"Jesus paid it all,

All to Him I owe.

Sin had left a crimson stain,

He washed it white as snow."

This is such Good News to them, for they have never heard it before.

—By MRS. W. B. ALLISON.

A Product of the Gospel

With my mother and little sister I had worked hard, but my brothers were all prodigals and

wasted what my father had left us. It was impossible to pay our debts, and we lived in misery. At last I cursed my home and left my mother. I thought to live differently, but alas it was like transplanting a tree in another place when it carried with it the disease. Then came war in Salvador and I enlisted with the hope that they would kill me; but I came out without even a wound. Once more I returned home, and one day a colporteur passed near our house selling Bibles; he talked much of Jesus Christ as the only Salvador (Saviour) of man and right there I offered a prayer and felt a movement in my heart. I urged him to stay the night, and before he left I had resolved to leave my life of sin.

Persecution came and they put me in prison; but with my Bible and hymn book I took the opportunity to preach to the judge and soldiers. In fine, the pastor proposed that I take up the work of colporteur, and the Lord has blessed me. When I commenced, it meant sleeping many times on the bare ground with only my valise and books to keep me company, but after two years God gave me the harvest, and then I did not travel one single day without coming to the house of some native convert.

—REPORT OF AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

Latin American Stories

III

COLOMBIA

What She Did When Persecuted

I wonder how many of you can find Colombia on the map? If you find it, look on the coast for a city named Cartagena. That city is not only the oldest one in Colombia, but also the oldest one in the Americas. It is surrounded by a thick stone wall. Several years ago, the agent for the American Bible Society went to Cartagena for the purpose of selling Bibles and holding services, but he was not welcomed; people there wanted nothing to do with either the Bible or the Protestant religion. So he went outside the walls. That was the beginning of one of Colombia's most promising missions.

In Cabrero there is now a little mission house where services are being held regularly. I want to tell you about a young girl of perhaps thirteen or fourteen. She had given her heart to God and became a member of the church. Her parents and friends, who were all Catholics, tried to persuade her not to join our church; when that did no good they threatened her with all kinds of things. Still she persisted in going where she could listen to the words that gave her new life and courage. One evening, as she was returning from the service she was met by some of her relatives, who beat her cruelly. They thought that by such harsh treatment they could frighten her and make her return to the Catholic

church. And what do you think this courageous little girl did? Did she weaken and give in? No, indeed. She went to the next service, which was a prayer meeting, still sore and bruised; and there in church she prayed for those who had treated her so shamefully, asked God to forgive them, and to open their hearts that His love might enter.

Such examples of love and faith are rare here, but we are scarcely surprised at that, for in Colombia the Bible is a forbidden book; the Roman church does not allow its members to read it. Many a person comes to the services in the Presbyterian chapel out of curiosity or to ridicule our teachings. There he hears things he has never heard before, and he is interested and comes again and again. In that way many have been led out of darkness into light. There are no Sunday schools in all Colombia, except where there is a mission. In all these Sunday schools it has been found that the young folks as well as the older ones take a great interest in the Bible stories. In Barranquilla, another city on the coast, a great many children come to Sunday school and interest in Bible study is kept up by asking questions. Each Sunday the pastor gives out two questions, which are to be answered the following Sunday. At the end of the year prizes are given to those who have the most correct answers. As a result, these young people are very well acquainted with their Bibles, which is of the greatest importance, as you and I know.

—By LOUISE CRUIKSHANK, in *Over Sea and Land*,
October, 1915.

A Secret About Colombia

Boys are very much alike in North America and in South America. You would be surprised to find how much alike they are. But there is a difference, too, and I am going to tell it to you as a secret, a helpful secret which you need not keep. It will help you to be grateful for the land that gave you birth and it will make you want to help those boys who were born in another land. The difference in the lands is what makes the difference in the boys. '

Did you ever hear this story? King Alfonso of Spain, when a very young man, asked Queen Victoria of England, "Why is your land greater than mine?" It is said that the good and wise queen picked up a Bible which lay upon a table near by and answered, "It is reverence for this Book which has made England a great nation. When Spain studies and reveres the Word of God she, too, will become great." The same may be said of the United States and its sister republic, Colombia. The United States is a country founded upon the open Bible. Colombia is a country in which the Bible is called a Forbidden Book, and where Bibles are still gathered and burned in the public squares. This is why teachers find boys in the United States clean and straightforward—jolly and full of fun and mischief, it is true, but as a rule, thinking clean thoughts and looking frankly out of honest eyes.

Boys and girls, thank God for your country, founded on the open Bible; your clean home influences, and pray that the Colombian boys and girls may not miss what you enjoy. Let us all help with a

will to send missionaries to Colombia, to teach the Bible to every creature.

—By MRS. WALTER S. LEE, in *Over Sea and Land*, October, 1913.

The Story of a Bible Which Escaped the Fire

Would you like to know how two of our members joined the Mission church? I believe you would, so I will tell you.

There was once a good man who sold many Bibles to the Colombians in a certain town. However, the priest ordered the people to bring them all to him, and they did so. Then he said to the man who cleans the church, "Take all of these Bibles and burn them." The man burned all but one. This, out of curiosity, he put in his pocket. When he arrived home, he read it, and wondered at the good words it contained, and why such good words should be burned.

He gave it to the women of the house also, and two of them believed in its teaching, and are now in our church.

—By ALEXANDER M. ALLAN, in *Over Sea and Land*, June, 1911.

A Day in Bogota

"Back of Bogota lies a range of steep hills. Two of the peaks tower over the city and are crowded with large white monasteries, Guadalupe and Monserrate. The 'Christ of Monserrate' has come to us, having been brought down several weeks ago in a grand procession, and after being carried through the streets on a stately platform, he was

installed in the Cathedral where we saw him one Saturday morning. We found a crowd surrounding a huge wax image of the Christ, all besmeared with blood, and most gruesome, but clad in an elegant lavender satin oriental tunic, covered with gilt trimmings and edged with rich fringe. Crowds thronged that corner of the great Cathedral where mass was being said, but few were attending the mass.

“There was not even a priest here but a simple policeman in blue uniform, and even his cap on, dispensing the blessings supposed to be granted by the Christ. Poor, ignorant souls were handing this policeman scapularies, handkerchiefs, prayer-books, and in fact whatever they had. This the policeman took and waved or passed over the extended hand of the reclining Christ, then handed back to the owner. For this privilege the poor souls had paid hard-earned cash, and to us the faces that passed on were such sad, unhappy ones as they went their several ways to the duties of the day. One old woman pressed her way forward and gave the policeman a gross or more of rosaries to pass over the hand of Christ. This done, up came another handful, which the policeman also waved over the hand. Then the old woman went out to sell these rosaries with the blessing in them. Money in that deal for her.

“To see a policeman in a temple dedicated to the Lord dispensing religion to right and to left, as fast as he could to these ignorant souls with no priest nearer than those attending mass in front, seemed

to us the limit of idolatry. While we were there an invalid was brought before the Christ in a litter. While she worshiped, a friend took something of hers and had it blessed, then she too was carried out and to her humble home and the duties of the day. Poor souls longing and struggling in their idolatry for the light that we idle gazers had to give. Would we could reach them and persuade them to turn to the living Christ."

—By LELIA W. QUINBY.

Felipe, the Fisher Boy

Felipe was born in the quaint, sleepy old city of Cartagena, played in its hot, sandy streets, and, when tired of play, slept in the shadow of its moss-grown, mouldy stone wall. As he grew older, he went fishing with his elders in the beautiful bay, became skilful in throwing the net and handling the canoe, at home helped by carrying on his head great baskets of nicely washed and ironed clothes to the rich ladies for whom his mother worked. When he felt like it, he went to the school, where, instead of studying, the boys spent most of the time in fighting, gambling, smoking and even drinking, for the master did little but read or sleep, and even sent the boys out to buy him strong drink, and then drank himself helpless in their presence. Sometimes the boys were turned loose for a sea bath, and then there was wild joy as they leaped the breakers, dived, swam and rolled over and over in the cool waves.

Sometimes on Sunday, if there were not too many clothes to be delivered, and his own one good

suit happened to be clean, and he possessed a pair of whole sandals, Felipe went to early morning mass, but it was so seldom that all the necessary conditions were fulfilled at the same time, that he probably didn't get to mass oftener than once in two months. But, then, that was often enough. He couldn't understand a word of it, and the meaningless performance was always the same. Anyway, he believed he went often enough to save himself from the "inferno."

The Sunday afternoon cock fight, however, was quite a different matter. There was life there, and it wasn't often that our boy missed that great event of the week. But one day two foreigners passed through the street, offering for sale a book they called "The Word of God." That did sound queer. And the men said the book contained the very words and teachings of our Lord and of the holy apostles. Felipe had been taught that only the "padres" (priests) possessed these teachings. Could it be possible that just common fishermen might have a right to read them? He felt just a little afraid of the book, and yet curious to handle it. His old grandfather invited the men to his house to explain these strange things, and Felipe will never forget how very odd that meeting seemed to him. When the men prayed, they not only bowed their heads, but they shut their eyes! Then they just talked quietly and earnestly with some one he could not see. It made him feel creepy. After a long talk with closed eyes, the men sang what they called "hymns," and that was fine. Felipe had a sweet

voice himself and loved singing. Some of the hymns were so joyful that he almost had to join in with them; others so sweet and sad that they brought moisture to his eyes. Then one of the men read from the book and told how our Lord loved and called common fishermen to follow Him. They said that the great St. Peter had been just a poor, ignorant fisherman and had to be taught many things over and over, exactly like the fishermen of Cartagena.

Grandfather bought one of the books, and the day came when Felipe, too, owned one and studied it faithfully. In a little while these strangers started what they called a Sunday School, where they taught from the book the sweetest, most wonderful stories of the love of God and of Christ. Felipe had always thought that God wanted only to condemn everybody in the world, that Christ wanted to punish every human being for His suffering on the Cross, and that only the constant, urgent pleading of the Blessed Virgin saved this unhappy world from the fierce fires of "inferno."

Now he learns that it was love that brought Christ to the world, love that took Him to the Cross, love that still seeks to save freely every human being, and his heart filled with love for this wonderful Saviour. He asked for and received baptism, and vowed the service of his life to this precious Jesus.

—By the late MISS JESSIE SCOTT, in leaflet published by the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church.

Latin American Stories

IV

CHILE

The Country Where There Are More Pianos Than Bath Tubs

Miss Lakes is the daughter of an elder of one of our churches, a young lady of some twenty summers, who teaches in the public school. One afternoon she was speaking with a missionary lady on things in general and health in particular. She remarked that when she lived in L— she used to wash her feet almost every week, but, "since I have come to M—— I don't dare do it, especially in the winter, for it makes me sick every time." The uncleanly habits of a large percentage of Chileans are terrible to contemplate, and the upper class Chilean just refuses to contemplate them and gets angry if anyone else does. Nevertheless one of themselves has said that there are more pianos than bathtubs in Chile.

But the question goes deeper than the skin. Cleanliness is next to Godliness: and usually follows upon it, though the reverse may not be true. And we make no mistake in the case of Chile if we surmise that the lack of physical cleanliness likely indicates the lack of moral cleanliness, too. One Chilean says, "Lying is the sin Chilean." A business man says he never trusts the word of another merchant of whatever class or position. One day when I returned to a storekeeper five pesos which

he had paid me above what was due me, he said there was not a Chilean in the city who would have done the same thing. Another said that no girl of the lower class over sixteen years of age, and no man from the Governor of the province down to the lowest peon, is pure. These statements may be too sweeping in their generality; but they indicate a condition that is anything but clean.

Chile needs soap for the skin, but infinitely more she needs the Gospel of Christ for the heart.

—DOROTHY R. EDWARDS.

A Doorkeeper in the House of the Lord

Francisco Caereres is the caretaker of our little Presbyterian chapel in Curico, Chile. He and his wife and his four children live in a couple of mean rooms behind the chapel; for they are very poor. The other evening he told me his story. He is one of several children. His father found it difficult to maintain the family, and when Francisco, still in his 'teens, began to sow his wild oats, as all his companions were doing, and as nearly all young men do here, I am sorry to say, he was cast out upon the street to shift for himself. He went from bad to worse, until he became an habitual drunkard, without anything to his name but the rags he had on his back. But this did not prevent him from marrying a widow with two children. He beat his wife and terrorized the children until one day he fell into the hands of the law. A former employer went his bail, which he immediately jumped.

But then began a new period. He was weary of the hard life. He wandered from town to town, trying to rid himself of his drink demon, and as a last resort traveled about seventy miles to find a former friend who had conquered his appetite for liquor. This friend, a friend, indeed, told him simply and directly of Jesus Christ, and His Gospel of salvation. Francisco was skeptical. But the seed had been sown, and during several more months of wandering it grew and bore fruit. Francisco surrendered his heart to the Lord; he was "converted," for he turned squarely about and started in the other direction.

It was a hard road. First he returned to the city where he had been arrested and gave himself up to justice. But the same friend who had paid his bail secured his release. Then he returned to his family and began to work to pay back the money his friend had forfeited as bail. Soon he came to Curico, where he and his wife joined our chapel. He was not yet a saint, and though drink never conquered him, his violent temper did. The fear-light in the eyes of the twelve-year-old boy shows plainly enough what had been suffered from that temper. But one who observes him to-day can see him taking giant strides upward on the narrow way. To-day his conscience is more tender than that of many a well-fed, well-clothed deacon who occupies the front pew every Sabbath morn. He works faithfully for his family. And he loves and serves his Lord as far as he knows, this doorkeeper in the House of the Lord.

—By MRS. DAVID R. EDWARDS.

Prayers That Cost Money

Our thoughts were recently called to a home where the mother was absent for some time visiting a married daughter. Another daughter, Carmela, always her pastor father's right-hand helper, was in charge. This daughter was mother, pastor's wife and housekeeper as well now, when her little sister was taken seriously ill. She cared for her, she kept up her work and she prayed. Everyone in that house and outside friends as well, lifted up their voices to God in faith. They plead as children with a loving father for that dear child. They knew He would hear and answer in the best way, the simple petitions from stricken, earnest, humble hearts. All without money and without price.

Only a few days after this little girl's recovery, a stricken mother, quite beside herself, arrived at the convent bar and asked for the head nun on duty. Her story was a pitiful one, and our hearts ached for her. Her little girl was lying seriously ill. She had left the bedside to come to buy prayers to be said on five consecutive days, at *two pesos* a mass,—she could not afford more. "Ask the good priest to pray long. Oh, I hope the blessed Virgin will hear and heal, that my little one may soon recover." "To be sure," replied the nun, "I will take the money immediately and *to-morrow* mass will be said for your child, and let us hope she will soon recover." Think of it! Wait until to-morrow to plead for a dying child. Oh, the joy of calling on God for our dear ones; but the deep sorrow of seeing hundreds depend

on the power of one man,—the priest—to bring God's blessing to the home.

—By BESSIE M. SMITH.

Life in the Tenements in Chile

If any one wishes to know how from 70 per cent. to 80 per cent of the population of our cities live, let them go to any one of the thousands of "conventillos," or tenement houses. The door that gives entrance to them is more or less like other doors, save, perhaps, a notice, "Rooms to let." At the end of a narrow passage will be found an open court surrounded by from twenty to fifty rooms, in which nearly as many families live. With inadequate water supply and the most limited conveniences, the rooms often receiving both light and air by the door only, do you wonder that at least one of every three babies born in Chile dies before it arrives at the age of one year?

Then think of the surroundings for the poor little children who live. In one such "conventillo," I was talking with a shoemaker who was working in a little lean-to beside his room. He and his boy of fifteen were working at the bench. The boy was undersized for twelve. Beside the bench stood a sewing machine, which they were paying for by instalments, and with which the wife sewed the shoes. In this same shed, open on one side, was the brazier, on which all the cooking is done, and a few pots and dishes on a box which served for a table. There was barely room to turn around. Another boy of sixteen

works for a tobacconist as errand boy. There is a pretty girl of seventeen and three small girls. The older girl cooks and washes and irons for the whole family. This shoemaker's one room has a window, and there are two visible beds, besides a box for the baby. I wonder where they all sleep. Some families have sheep skins under the mattresses, which are dragged out and put on the floor at night for the children. This floor was of bricks, and these broken in many places,—certainly not very comfortable to sleep on. There was no chair, but I was offered a seat upon the end of a box, with as much courtesy as if it had been an upholstered couch. Just before entering this home I had seen an intoxicated woman with her baby in her arms stagger into the room adjoining. While we were talking she began to rave. "This is dreadful for the children to hear," I said. "I wish they never heard anything worse," the father replied. "This is nothing."

—By MRS. J. F. GARVIN.

The Conversion of a Chilean Terror

Six years ago he dwelt in the tents of wickedness. Head and shoulders above the average Chilean in height, his muscle was second only to his insatiable thirst. A good workman when sober, he spent two-thirds of his time in debauchery, and was the terror alike of employers and fellow workmen because of his foul mouth and his violent temper. After an unusually extended spree, he went down to the port in pursuit of new adventures, and wandering aimlessly

one evening through one of the quieter streets, was attracted by the sound of singing. It seemed to come from a building which had a very unfamiliar look, being neither bar nor residence, and he stopped to listen. Something far down in his sin-worn heart stirred at what seemed to him heavenly music, and he would fain have investigated, but the unfamiliar atmosphere deterred him. With a sigh of great and unspeakable longing, he passed on, to enter the nearest bar; but the memory remained with him and he often wondered what that place could have been.

Months later, one night a comrade invited him to go to a meeting to be held by the "Canutos" (term of reproach for evangelical Christians), and because his friend was insistent and he had nothing else to do for the moment, he went. As he entered the simple hall, the girl at the organ began to play the air which had so charmed and haunted him. Ah, here was the explanation! Hungrily, greedily, he drank it in—the song first and then the sermon, and went forth a redeemed man, as great a miracle as Lazarus raised from the dead. That night the grog-shop and the gambling den lost their best customer.

It was good to see him the night of the dedication of the Mission Building at Santa Isabel, the light of heaven on his scarred and rugged face, as he stood up before his comrades and said: "You fellows know what I was, and you know what has changed me. Come and try it, men; Jesus will do the same for each of you!"

—From 1915 *Year Book* of the Presbyterian Mission in Chile.

Latin American Stories

V

BRAZIL

The Worship of Saints

Do you know that images are as common in Brazil as in China or India? Do you know they are really worshiped? If questioned, the *priests* will tell you that it is really God who is worshiped; the saint, represented by the image, is merely appealed to to present the prayers before God, who is too busy to hear ordinary mortals. But the large majority of the *laity* will frankly tell you that they really pray to the *image*. A woman promised a new dress to one of her images, if the latter would grant a certain petition. A young girl slapped her Saint Antonio (the patron saint of lovers) and threw him under the bed because her love affairs were not prospered!

Here is the legend of Saint Benedict, the negro saint, who is a prime favorite. It is told, together with an incident of one of Benedict's devotees, by Rev. Paschoal Pitta, the young pastor in Piumhy, one of the fields of the East Brazil Mission.

Benedict was a young negro cook, servant of some avaricious priest. He used to steal every day food and other things to give to the poor. One day the priest called to Benedict as he was going out with a basket of stolen food for the poor: "What have you in the basket, Benedict?" And he, in confusion, answered: "Flowers." "Open the basket at once."

And to the negro's great surprise, he found, upon opening the basket, that the food had been changed into flowers. Arriving at the home of the poor the flowers turned again into food. Such is the story of this "holy man," one of the chief intercessors before God. Here, too, is one of the great fallacies of the Romish Church, that "the end justifies the means." He was a thief and a holy man!

—MRS. S. R. GAMMON.

Out of the Dark into the Light

A few years ago, in one of the little towns of interior Brazil, I was asked to go and see a woman who was very sick. I knew her by reputation as one of the most religious women in the community. She was noted for the festivals which she celebrated for the numerous images in her oratory; for the many pilgrimages which she had made to the distant miracle shrines; for her punctilious observance of all the requirements of the ceremonial law of her church. Like the woman of the Gospel story, "She had spent all her living" in trying to get peace for her soul. But the words of the Master had come true: in drinking of the earthly fountains, her thirst had never been quenched, and as she lay on what proved to be her death-bed, her soul was in despair, and she sent asking that the Protestant minister might come to her.

She had never entered our church hall, for the most awful lies about our services had been diligently propagated. We were "emisaries of the devil, we

prayed to the devil, we sang hymns in honor of the devil," etc., and so the poor woman had been afraid to come to our services.

I went to the house, and they took me back to the room where the poor soul lay. As I stood for a moment and looked at her, my heart went out in a very earnest prayer that God would never ask me again to look into another such face. Oh, I hope that never again may I see such anguish, such utter despair, such terrible bitterness in a woman's eyes. I tried to talk to her about her soul, but suddenly she cried out, in the most awful tone, a tone which will ring in my soul until the judgment day: "Oh, don't talk to me about dying! I cannot die. Oh, I am afraid to die! It is so dreadful out there. Oh, it is so dark out there!" An eternity without Christ is dark; it is utter, hopeless darkness! And that woman was facing the dark alone!

I told her of her Saviour, who died for her; of the loving Father in heaven, who loved her and who was calling her to come home to Himself. How she drank it in!

Two days later, a messenger called and told me to come very quickly, as the woman was dying and wanted to see me. I went down to the house, and as I entered through the little narrow hallway, I stumbled over the body of the husband, lying there dead drunk on the floor. He had lived as a beast all his days and had treated her as one. By the mother's side were the two little children—one a babe in arms, and the other about two years old. You who are mothers, think of leaving your babies to such a hus-

band! But, oh, as I stood and looked down into the quiet face, how I did thank God for the wonderful Saviour we have. Now there was peace and joy in that face. I stooped and said to her, "My sister, are you afraid to die now?" And the eyes opened for the last time on earth, radiant with that light which never shone on earth or sea, and she spoke so quickly, "Oh, no, I am not afraid now; I know that I am just going home to my Father. It is all light now." And she was gone; out of the dark, into the light!

—By REV. R. F. LENINGTON.

The Scare Crow Image

Several years ago a rich farmer in Brazil had a sick wife. They were ignorant and superstitious and visited many shrines in the hope that a cure might be wrought.

The farmer had a rice field, and as the crop ripened the birds became troublesome, so he told one of his slaves to make a scarecrow. As the slave was a carpenter, he made a good one out of a log, and dressed it up in some old clothes. After the rice was harvested a big flood came along and carried the scarecrow down the river for some miles. Some boys found it, and told the village priest. He warned them not to tell anybody what they had discovered. He then went and got the scarecrow and put it up in the church, telling the people it was an image of a saint fallen from heaven, that would work miracles and cures. People flocked from far and near, and brought money, hoping to get relief from various ills.

The sick wife of the farmer, learning of the image, asked her husband to take her to visit it, in the hope of getting a cure. Her husband told her he had little faith in its value, but if she wanted to go he would take her. They took with them, to look after the horses, the slave who had made the scarecrow for the rice field. When they reached the church and the slave walked in behind them, he laughed aloud when he saw the image of the saint. He was reprov'd for his irreverence by his mistress, until he declared that the saint set up by the priest was no other than the scarecrow which he himself had made.

—Facts related by REV. GEORGE A. LANDES.

Why a Man of Sixty Learned to Read

Henrique Gomes, a devoted man of sixty, was living in the country in Brotas, in the State of Sao Paulo, Brazil. In his home was a shrine at which he and his wife and thirteen children worshiped each day. It so happened that one day, some years ago, one of our missionaries, Dr. Chamberlain, came to this town to preach. There attended the service a vicious man, horse racer and gambler. He was impressed by what he heard, and told Mr. Gomes the next day about the service, and said if in his youth he had heard such teaching he would be a different man. He said the missionary had preached from a book called the Bible. "What is the Bible?" asked Mr. Gomes. The other man could not tell him. Mr. Gomes said he would ask the priest. The priest replied, "It is the word of God." "The word of God!"

said Mr. Gomes, "and you never told me there was such a book. I am going to get it." "Much good it will do you," said the priest. "You do not know how to read." "If that's it, I will learn how to read," replied his parishioner. So this man of sixty secured a teacher and learned with his children to read.

In the Bible he read in the second commandment that it is wrong to have images; so he took down his images of the saints from the shrine in his home, put them in a sack and threw them in the river. His old mother said if Henrique did this, he must have some good reason, and so she would destroy her's, too.

The whole family became believers and Mr. Gomes was later elected an elder in the Presbyterian Church. Meeting Mr. Chamberlain after his conversion, he asked the missionary if his father and grandfather knew about Christ, and if so, why they did not come and tell them.

Mr. Gomes became the center of Christian influence. He was the constable of his district, and whereas before he became a Christian there were frequent fights and arrests; after he became a believer, he himself acted as peacemaker between quarreling families and changed the whole atmosphere of the district.

—By REV. GEORGE A. LANDES.---

Why So Paori Would Not Worship the Image

He was a tiny boy of Brazil and lived within a stone's throw of a beautiful orange grove. He had only heard about Jesus a short time before the incident, of which you are now to hear, occurred, but so full was he of the good news that he told it everywhere he went.

So Paori, for this was his name, had been brought up to worship images, and to pray to Mary, the Mother of Jesus, but one day a missionary came and told him that although Mary was a wonderful woman whom the heavenly Father loved very much, she was not to be worshiped as God. So Paori believed the missionary and had ceased to believe in images or pray to the Virgin Mary. ☩

Not far from Curityba, in the town where So Paori lived, there was built a beautiful new Roman Catholic church. It was ready for services, except for one thing, it had no patron saint and no image of such saint on the altar.

A company of villagers gathered to talk the matter over. All the money had been spent on the building itself; therefore, the image must be inexpensive, and be made of wood instead of carved stone or metal. After they had talked quite a while Paori, who was standing with the crowd listening, heard an orange grower say, "Well, you can have one of my orange trees, if some one of you can carve an image from the trunk." A carpenter spoke up quickly and said he would do the carving for nothing, so the crowd walked down the path into the grove where

the trees were heavy with delicious fruit and they cut down the tree, So Paori and the other children scrambling for the oranges as they were shaken down.

Two weeks passed, and word came from the carpenter that the image was ready. A time was appointed, and it was taken with much ceremony to the church. Here a crowd waited to do it homage, and after the priest blessed it, the crowd bowed in wonder before it, presenting to it gifts of tinsel, jewelry and bright bits of calico. All bowed except little So Paori, who stood erect, his head thrown back and his tiny hands in his trousers pockets.

"So Paori, bend the knee," said the priest. So Paori shook his head. The priest repeated his command, his face becoming red with anger at the child's attitude.

"You won't, won't you; well, why won't you?" he asked, shaking the child rudely by the shoulders.

"I'll tell you why I won't, padre. I used to know that image very intimately when it was only an orange tree, and I'm not going to worship it as God now."

—From story told the editor by MRS. MACLAREN.
In *Over Sea and Land*, June, 1910.

Afraid of the Bible

In Brazilian homes the Bible is almost unknown. Many children have never heard of it, and many people live and die without ever seeing a Bible.

Rev. H. C. Tucker of the American Bible Society tells of a man he met who was so afraid of the Bible

that he refused even to look at or handle it. He said he was afraid to touch it, that really he had as soon take hold of the most poisonous snake as to touch that book; he believed if he were to take it in his hand, he would fall dead on the spot; and trembling with fear he asked the agent to move on.

The children are never told of the One who is always ready to hear and answer prayer, but are taught to bow down before images, to make promises to the saints, or to make long journeys to visit some holy spot, in order to obtain answers to their prayers. There is a large granite rock in the State of Parana, not far from where I lived, that is constantly visited by persons who go there to worship. They say there are marks on it which are the footprints left by the animal that carried Mary and the child Jesus down into Egypt when they were fleeing from Herod. Just think of it! What a long journey they must have had!

—By MRS. G. A. SANDS, in *Over Sea and Land*, June, 1911.

Our Little Cousins in Brazil

Almost as soon as a child is born in a Roman Catholic family in Brazil the priest is sent for to christen it. If not baptized, it is believed that the child, should it die, would go to a dreadful place known as "limbo." A little rosary, or string of beads, with a cross attached which has been blessed by the priest is placed about the child's neck. The child is generally given the name of the saint on

whose day it is born. When the child begins to talk, it is taught to speak of God as "our Papa in heaven." Jesus they call "the little child Jesus." They know nothing of Him as the Saviour.

The children in Brazil have little or nothing to help them live pure and beautiful lives. They are encouraged to be vain, deceitful, and false. They learn to use vile and vulgar words. They grow old in the ways of the world while they are yet children. There are no Sunday schools (only those in connection with the mission schools), no books and papers suitable to their years, no sweet hymns. At all the Romish services there are nothing but Latin chants, not one word of which is understood. They are taught to look first of all to the Virgin Mary for salvation. The priests proclaim Mary as the door of heaven. Christ is only a minor character in the plan of salvation. He can do nothing unless Mary permits it, or rather unless she suggests it. God is represented as an angry judge with whom Mary must intercede. When our little cousins in Brazil go over their rosary on saying their prayers, they repeat ten prayers to Mary to one to God. The very heart of their prayers is ever and always: "Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and in the hour of death." One of the chief teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, which is here copied word for word, is: "Many things asked of God are not received; but if asked of Mary, they are obtained."

The children in Brazil are taught to regard St. Anthony, or San Antonio, as they call him, as the

great saint of little children, the one on whom they call for help, especially if they want to win in a game or at school. St. Anthony, they are told, was the playfellow of Christ when he was a child; that he carried Christ's playthings for Him and assisted Him in His sports.

The one great cause of this spiritual darkness is ignorance of the Bible. The people are not permitted to read the Bible. Only the priests have this privilege. Their excuse for keeping the Bible from the people is that the people will not get the right meaning. Therefore the teachings of the Bible must come through the priests. But they seldom teach it correctly, and very often it is taught incorrectly. For instance, in the Bible of the Romish Church the second commandment, "Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image," does not appear.

Instead of teaching the people the truth, the priests lead them off into all kinds of errors. They encourage them in their superstitions. For their own selfish purposes they keep the people in darkness.

Rev. H. C. Tucker, of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, tells of a man he met while traveling on a train who had with him a boy of nine years, terribly burned on his face, neck, and arms. The man kept near him a huge bundle over which he watched closely. Mr. Tucker learned that the bundle contained fifty pounds of candles. The man and boy were on their way to the shrine of a saint who had the power to overcome fire. The man told Mr. Tucker that when

the boy was two years old he had been fearfully burned. The priest had encouraged the father to pray to this saint. When the boy got well, the father made a vow that as soon as he possibly could he would place the child's weight in candles before the shrine of the saint in a distant town. It had taken him seven years to save the money to buy the candles, for he was a poor man.

—By A. M. B., Foreign Department Woman's
Missionary Council, M. E. Church.

Latin American Stories

VI

VENEZUELA

Moving Stores

South America is a land of moving stores. Stores on four legs, stores on two legs. Water-venders carry water in skin bags and sell it by the cup. The milkman of South America takes his cow along with him. The bakery usually consists of two donkeys wearing pocket blankets and in these blankets are scores of loaves of bread and dozens of strange, dry bread that the poorest people eat.

Bullocks draw carts laden with household goods, but will not deliver purchases to your house, and you must play delivery wagon, and put your pride in your pocket if you mean to buy a kettle, boiler, washboard or any of the many things a missionary will need.

I say *that a missionary will need* because the natives of South America, though they do use kettles, never use boilers, and the very thought of boiling clothes or rubbing them on a washboard would make them call on the saints to preserve them and you from such shocking extravagances and I confess that to wash *their* clothes in the way to which we are accustomed would doubtless make them fall apart; first, because they are of such poor quality, and secondly, because they wear them until they are literally pot black.

Do you know how the children of Venezuela take a bath? The country is hilly, and when the rain comes it washes down the streets and makes great pools in the valleys. In these the children bathe. And in the river the grown people take their "tub" on special occasions.

One of the most profitable trades of South America is that of image selling. Tall images, short images, wooden images, stone images, images for a fraction of a cent apiece and images—but there are very few of these—costing many dollars. The dealers carry their ware on their backs and their arms, and start out laden with the statues, to return, often, at night, empty handed.

—From *Over Sea and Land*, June, 1910.

Selling the Bible on Lake Maracaibo

A short time ago we visited a small city on the other shore of Lake Maracaibo, Venezuela, for the purpose of spreading the Scriptures. We called on the mayor first of all, and he received us very cordially, bought a Bible, and took us out to introduce us to some of the prominent people of the city. Then we started out from house to house, selling the Scriptures. At first the people were somewhat suspicious, but soon the news about the little booklets and the foreigners selling them spread through the town, and the people grew more and more interested in getting the Word of God. They even called to us from the houses asking for the Gospel. The little boys came running with their pennies and asked, "Have you a Gospel of Luke?" "May I have a Gospel of John?" etc. We had only one

day to stay, and we tried to cover as large a part of the town as possible in that time. Some of the young men were so interested that they went with us from house to house introducing us and recommending the books. The result was that before evening we had entirely exhausted our supplies, and everywhere people were seen reading or talking about the Scriptures.

When we were ready to leave we met the mayor again, and while we stood on a street corner talking to him, a man came up and said somebody had told him that our books were bad and that one of them had been torn to pieces. When the mayor heard that he said:

“These books are good and they are not to be torn up. If they were not good books I would not allow them to be sold in this city.”

This man is far from being a Christian, but he knew that the reading of the Bible would have a good influence over the lives of the people, and he desired to improve the moral life in the town.

We certainly had a remarkable day, and the whole city seemed stirred by a power from God. The priest was out of town that day; but he is sure to make a fight against the Gospel. Yet God has promised to watch over His Word.

These people often have a hard struggle before they dare to read and search the “forbidden book.” Not long ago I offered a little book, containing extracts from the Bible, to a young man. He took the book and looked into it, but when he saw that it was from the Bible he said that it was forbidden to read it.

Whenever I hear anyone say such things, that are contrary to God's Word and the truth, I have a habit of asking him, "Who says so?" even though I know very well who gives such commands. But it always gives a good chance to tell about a higher authority, who also has something to say in the matter. I asked this man the same question, and of course I received the usual answer. "The priests say so." To this I said nothing, but opened my Bible and showed the young man some places where God speaks to us about reading His Word, and about the blessings we receive from reading it. Then I asked him whether he thought that it would be wise for me to obey the commands of some inferior or pretended officer of this city if he commanded something that was contrary to the wishes of the highest authorities or the laws of the country. This opened his eyes some, and he admitted that it would be dangerous for me to do so. Now he was willing to read the Bible further, and for two hours we continued to search the Scriptures. Afterward he was glad to take the book home and read it.

In this way the first seed must be sown all over South America. What happened in the above-mentioned town might well happen in hundreds of others, if there were workers to go to them.

May the people of North America see the responsibility they have for these people, their next-door neighbors.

—From the *Bible Society Record*, October, 1907.

Latin American Stories

VII

BOLIVIA, PERU and ECUADOR

Carrying the Bible to South America's Darkest Fields

The darkest part of the American hemisphere is found in the republics of Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador—the old empire of the Incas. . . . The constitution and laws have put more restrictions on religious liberty in those countries than anywhere else in all America. The Inquisition was not finally abolished till 1821. As late as 1836 the penalty was death for holding any worship other than the Roman Catholic in Bolivia and Peru. As late as 1896 the constitution of Ecuador excluded all other worship. To this day in the three republics Protestants are subject to exceptional legal privations. A colporteur in Argentina, named Jose Mongiardino, after good success in the northern provinces of that republic, could not rest when they told him that he must not cross the frontier into Bolivia. At last he did cross it with a small quantity of books, but a high ecclesiastical functionary of Contagaita, one of the cities that he canvassed, had declared that Mongiardino would not get out of Bolivia alive. In a lonely place on the road he was beset by two emissaries of the priesthood and murdered. . . . Heroes were not lacking to follow in his footsteps, though the difficulties seemed

insurmountable. One reached the frontier, but was providentially turned back. Two others reached Sucre by a rapid rush, and then turned back. At last, however, a band of three from the east coast pushed a steady canvass clear through Bolivia and on through Peru, returning to Montevideo by sea to report that the land of the Incas was penetrable. One of these was Andrew M. Milne, the veteran agent of the American Bible Society, who deserves to be called the Livingstone of South America.

—THOMAS B. WOOD.

Latin American Stories

VIII

NEW MEXICO

THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD

Three Illustrations

When Rev. Samuel Gorman was recalled from New Mexico at the outbreak of the Civil War, he left behind him at least one Spanish Bible. This was in the possession of a young man who had been in Mr. Gorman's employ. He continued to read the Bible and when he married he read it to his wife, who learned to believe in the Book and love it as her husband did. There was no Protestant church, no missionary to help them, and so they worshiped alone until the Congregational Church established a mission in their vicinity. This man, who was still living in 1914, was the first convert of Protestant missions in New Mexico.

A Spanish Bible was picked up on the road near Las Vegas in 1868, the finder exchanging it for a spelling book. The man with whom he made the exchange was fond of reading, and began at once to study his new book. He gained some knowledge of the way of life and told the story to others as well as he could, in a wonderful way preparing the field for missionaries who later reached his neighborhood.

Father Gomez was another to whom the Word was revealed. His ancestors came to this country with the Spanish conquerors, living in the manner of the patriarchal families for three hundred years. In some way he had seen a Spanish Bible and was impressed with the truths it contained. Although he was a poor man he determined to possess a copy. He borrowed a yoke of oxen and with another ox to sell, started on his journey of 15 miles to Santa Fe to secure the Book. The ox was sold for \$25, and the Bible purchased. Father Gomez read with joy; accepting the teachings and telling his friends of the love of God, he formed them into a group of Bible Christians, among whom a church was soon organized when Presbyterian missionaries came to them. When the General Assembly of that denomination met in New York in 1889 a young man spoke before a group of women holding that priceless Bible in his hands. It had lost its covers from use. The young man, a grandson of Father Gomez, told what a power it had been in bringing people to God, and said in closing, "I bless and praise God for the priceless gift, and I would not part with it for all the world beside."

—From McLEAN-WILLIAMS'

"Old Spain in New America"

The Two Captures of Acoma

From Laguna, New Mexico, you may drive to historic Acoma, the "sky city" of the Indians, located on a lofty rock. Back in 1598, this strong-

hold was attacked by the Spanish general Don Juan Oñate, who sought to subdue all the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico. "The chief men came down and invited Oñate and his followers to visit them. They finally consented, and barely escaped annihilation at the hands of the Indians. The refusal of Oñate to enter Estufu, or underground Council House, was all that saved them. The Indians had concealed a band of armed warriors in the darkness, prepared to avenge the sufferings of their countrymen in the other pueblos.

In November of the same year the "Sky City" was again visited by another Spanish force under Juan de Zaldivar, and when they were scattered about the village the Indians suddenly attacked from all sides; of the whole band four only escaped by a daring leap from the cliff, fortunately striking upon great sand heaps below.

In January of the following year a brother of Zaldivar made an attack upon Acoma and after a most bloody battle succeeded in capturing the place, but only after nearly all the defenders were killed. Acoma was later re peopled by the Indians, but they never were friendly to their Spanish conquerors.

The second capture of Acoma was in 1629 by the good Fray Juan Ramirez. This apostle to the Indians determined to establish a mission upon the lofty rock, and alone left Santa Fe, refusing an escort of soldiers, bearing no weapon but love in his heart and the crucifix in his hand. Footsore

and weary he came to the foot of the rock, but as he began the ascent of the narrow stairway the Indians poured down upon him such a flight of arrows that he was compelled to take refuge under the over-hanging cliff. Just then a little girl toppled and fell from the summit, but was caught by a sand-covered ledge out of sight of the people above, who supposed she had fallen to her death. The Fray quickly gathered the child in his arms and stepping boldly into the path once more, carried her safely to the top of the rock. The Indians, believing a miracle had been wrought, received him reverently, as one coming from the gods. For more than twenty years he dwelt among them, teaching them to read and write and instructing them in the doctrines of the Church. He was greatly beloved by them, and his name with that of Las Casas should be written in letters of gold over against the black record of so many of the adventurers. The Franciscans won, in a most remarkable manner, the love and confidence of the Indians, and their consecration and benevolent interest in the victims of Spanish exploitation is the one bright page in the history of Spanish conquest in America. One of the most interesting, most majestic and massive of the old churches stands on the rock of Acoma, recalling the conquest of peace by Fray Ramirez."

—From McLEAN-WILLIAMS'
"Old Spain in New America."

Children's Day in Purgatory

"Suppose you were taught that they observe 'children's day' in purgatory; that every child there for whom friends on earth buy a candle will have a lighted candle to carry in the procession, and that every child for whom a candle is not bought on earth marches with the procession, but with its up-raised finger burning; would you not, if you believed it, pay any price for a candle, so your child might not have its finger burn?

"Suppose you were taught that unless you had the priest's forgiveness for your sins and his blessing as you lay on your dying bed that you would go to hell; would you not get money from any source, so you might have the sprinkling with holy water and the anointing with oil at the hand of the priest who had the keeping of your soul in his hand?

"Suppose you believed that your baby would be lost unless the priest baptized that child; would you not get the money for the baptism and give it to the priest, no matter at what sacrifice?"

These are things which the priests of the Roman Catholic Church have been teaching to the superstitious Mexicans in New Mexico, right within the borders of the United States.

—FROM McLEAN-WILLIAMS'
"Old Spain in New America."

The Penitentes of New Mexico

The Order of Penitent Brothers was even more active in the days of the early missionaries than it

is to-day. This is the development of the Third Order of Saint Francis, the name having been changed three centuries ago in Spain before the Franciscan monks brought it to this country. In America self-torture was added to the original requirements of the order. The members, some twenty-five or thirty-five thousand strong, claim allegiance to the Catholic Church, although the Church will not allow the celebration of their rites within its buildings. Men and women are members, the women meeting separately except during the services of Holy Week. Good Friday is the day on which the religious rites are especially carried out, although each Friday in Lent service is conducted at the Morado and processions are held at night in which torture is undergone. On Good Friday is held what is called the Procession to Calvary. Several men carry heavy wooden crosses bound to their naked backs. Others, stripped to the waist, scourge themselves as they pass along the road with scourges dipped in salt water to make them sting more cruelly. The backs bleed under the cutting scourge and men, exhausted through pain, fall down only to be urged on by those attending them.

The general idea that the Crucifixion as enacted by the Penitentes is dying out is denied by those who are upon the scene. The nailing of the victim, or hero, as he prefers to be regarded, to the cross, does not take place, although he begs for the nails, believing the endurance of this greater agony is a glory to him; but a man is stretched, bound with

ropes upon the cross. his side pierced until the blood flows from it, and then the cross is elevated.

In "Our Mexicans" Rev. Robert M. Craig has given a vivid description of the services in the Morado or Holy Dwelling, to which he was admitted through the influence of a friend. "The building is of adobe, with large sliding doors in one end, and with but one small, round hole in one side for light and ventilation. The floor is native earth, except at the end where the altar is located. In front of this table, on a small stool, sit two men, each holding a stone in his hand. Directly in front of the stool, but on the earthen floor at some distance from the front of the altar platform, is a stand on which is a wooden triangle, having one lighted candle on the apex, three on the base, and five on either side. In front of this the Penitentes stand facing the lights. These men for days have been torturing themselves. Now their heads and backs and arms are bandaged. These men we would suppose to be the most religious in the community; instead, they are regarded by the people as the most deluded and of the lower class, doing penance not only for the sins they have committed, but for those which they intend to commit during the coming year.

"All things being ready, at the blast of a trumpet the meeting is in progress. The choristers under the table sing and play one verse. The men in front of the table strike three times on the seats with the stones they hold in their hands, then one of the Penitentes steps forward and extinguishes

one of the lights. This continues until all the lights but one have disappeared. There is silence for a moment. Then a large, flat surface, probably nine by twelve feet, apparently of wood, covered with zinc, which in its turn is covered with leather, is placed on the floor. The doors in the front of the building are closed and barred. The Hermanas range themselves about the room. The music is again started, and at a given signal the last light is gone. From boxes and barrels previously ranged round the room, ropes and chains and sticks are drawn, and for about one half-hour the clashing of chains and the clamor of other instruments is maddening.

“The noise, the groans, and the darkness I can never forget. If at any time I want an illustration of that ‘outer darkness’ I only think of that awful night in the Penitentes’ meeting-house.

“What does it all mean? Not ‘the arrival of the soul in purgatory,’ as some one has said. As the candles are again lighted, I see one of the Penitentes go forward and take from the wall a cross on which is an image intended to represent our Saviour, who has died during the darkness, and at once the whole mystery is clear. The darkness, with all the unearthly sounds, is intended to represent the transactions at Calvary on the Good Friday night when the ‘King of Glory’ bowed His head and gave up the ghost.

“After this service the image on the cross is borne from the little chapel to the house of a friend where entertainment has been provided, and there

the music is kept up until the morning, when all return to the Morado, from which they go to their homes in peace."

—From McLEAN-WILLIAMS'
"Old Spain in New America."

Burning in Hell

Another missionary tells of a daring attempt of one of the clergy to prove to his people the punishment for disobeying the authority of the clergy: "A mother of three grown sons was dying. She had come to doubt the sanctity and genuineness of the priesthood, and especially of the priest in this particular village, and her last request was that they would not allow him to bury her. This request they honored, laying her away without the religious ceremony. Soon the husband was called upon by the priest to explain why he did not request him to say mass at the burial. He told his wife's wishes in the matter. The priest told him his wife was in hell and would remain there until he had mass for her deliverance. The man was rather bold and dared to dispute the belief that his wife was in torment, 'for,' he said, 'my wife was a good woman.' 'I will prove to you next Sabbath,' said the priest, 'that your wife is burning in hell.' It became known that the demonstration was to take place, so there was a great crowd gathered to see the work. The priest led the way to the cemetery, armed with his vessel of holy water and his crucifix with a long staff. When he reached the grave he

pressed the staff down into the grave some two feet or more and worked it about until the hole was left open. He then poured holy water into the hole. It was only a little while until a crackling like fire was heard and something like smoke began to escape. The priest had made good and told the wicked man that the smoke was from hell, where his wife was in torment. The demonstration was a success, and the man was convinced, and began negotiations with the priest for terms to get her out. He was told that owing to the aggravation of his crime it would take \$500. This he could not pay, so he was in a great state. You see he was especially guilty, because he had tried to evade the established forms of the holy church. His wife's sister came to the rescue. She told the man to make no contract, but to go home with her and she would show him what to do. He did so. After all had gone from the cemetery she told her brother-in-law to get a shovel and go with her. They went to the grave and opened it and found there a pile of quick lime, which, of course, began to slack when the water was poured on it. This happened a few years ago, but thanks to Him who will lead all who care to follow, the day of such things is fast passing, and the little weak churches and the mission schools are bringing about the change, slowly, it seems at times, but truly, truly."

This occurred in the southwest of our own United States.

—From McLEAN-WILLIAMS'
"Old Spain in New America."

Latin American Stories

IX

CUBA

CHILD LIFE IN CUBA

Let us go to Cuba for a little visit and meet some of her boys and girls. I will introduce you to Jose, Manuel, Dolores, Horacio, and Angela. They will very politely shake your hand and say: "*Tengo much gusto de conocerle*" (I am very glad to know you). Then before very long you will all be playing London Bridge, drop the handkerchief, or baseball. When the bell rings for school, they will become very quiet, step into line, and march to their classrooms. Some of them will study their lessons in English and others in Spanish. How do you think you would like to study arithmetic or geography in Spanish or German or Chinese? These children are anxious to learn English; so they study their lessons hard, though many times they make very funny mistakes.

If you should visit the public schools, you would hear the children studying out loud. What a perfect hubbub! But that is the Cuban way.

Now I shall tell you something very sad. Dolores is nearly fifteen years old and will soon be too big to come to school. Next year she will have to stay at home, because it is not proper for her to go on the streets alone nor to carry books. Dolores speaks English well, but she is just in the fourth

grade, and she will receive no more education. Really she will be considered quite a well-educated girl.

There are many children in Cuba who do not go to school at all, although the country has a law requiring them to be educated to a certain extent. The law is not enforced, however; so these children run all over the streets and make disturbances outside schoolrooms and church windows.

The saddest thing about the children of Cuba is that they do not know and love Jesus Christ as He wants them to. They have no Bible; for all the Catholic Bibles are in the churches, and they are written in Latin. The children would tell you, if you should ask them, that they have a Bible; but upon seeing it, you discover that it is a prayer book. Many of them do not know what a Bible is. If one should obtain a Bible, the priest would probably take it away from him.

The people worship the saints and believe that they have power to answer prayers and to perform miracles. There are many images in the churches, and each one is supposed to represent some saint. The children hear more about the saints than they do about anything else. One little girl told her teacher that Satan was a saint; another said that God was a saint.

During Easter week the churches are full of people trying to obtain forgiveness for their sins. Every good Catholic has to go to church during Easter time. On the Sunday before Easter they had a special service to celebrate the triumphal en-

try of Jesus (Palm Sunday). Every one in the church was given a palm branch which the priests had blessed; then they marched in a procession around the church. These palm branches are supposed to keep away evil spirits and disease. On Thursday the bishop washed the feet of twelve beggars in celebration of the washing of the disciples' feet. On Friday they put the image of Christ on the cross. When they took it down that evening they put it in a glass coffin, where it stayed until nine o'clock Saturday morning. Thousands of people visited the church to kiss the image of Jesus. During the time that the image was in the coffin the heavens were supposed to be closed. No sins could be forgiven; but at nine o'clock the bells began to ring and the cathedral clock to chime to notify the people that the heavens were opened again.

One little girl told a missionary that she could not play Friday, but would have to be very sad, for God was dead. The children really believe that God dies every year.

Cuban children think that Jesus is an image with a crown of thorns on His head and a wound in His side. They do not know that He arose from the dead to save them and that He can fill their lives with a blessed peace and joy.

—By MANELLE M. FORSTER, in leaflet published
by Woman's Missionary Council, M. E.
Church, South.

